1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

WAR AND WAR LEADERSHIP

COUP AND STATUS

Comanche war notions conformed to the general Plains pattern of raiding and coup-counting.[1] The raid might be made by a party of any size, from a single warrior up. The coup was an individual exploit, made in any contact with the enemy, *after* it had been socially recognized both as achieved in fact and as worthy of distinction; a rough equivalent of an official citation after a modern engagement, if such were undiluted by political considerations.

The life of the Comanche male centered around warfare and raiding. The main objectives were the taking of horses, the counting of coup, and the killing of enemies. Motives for horse-taking were two. Horses, as we have seen, were the important form of property accumulation; the man who had a large herd was wealthy; he could afford generosity to his friends and relatives; he harbored visiting guests from other tribes. Horses also gained him prestige for bravery and cleverness; the taking of horses under difficult conditions provided opportunity for exploits of valor. Such exploits made reputation. Horses gained by inheritance, gift, or breeding reflected the first value, but not the second (except as a carry-over). The killing of enemies was similar in that it led to prestige through accumulation of war honors; but it showed a more direct tribal function when vengeance for the death of a tribesman came in question—though tribal interest was not absent from horse-taking; to have your horses stolen was to be out-matched and shamed by the successful thief (an out-triber).

It required more bravery to hit an adversary with a spear or a war club than to pierce him with a bow-driven arrow or a gun-driven bullet. Thus striking an enemy gave ground for an honored coup, while long-distance killing did not. The how of the killing mattered more than the killing itself. A coup was more valued than a scalp, for, "Anybody could scalp a dead man." But the Comanche considered the removal of a scalp under fire as worthy of a coup. How much scalp the Comanche took depended on how hot the circumstances were. He preferred to take the whole scalp, but if he was pressed for time he seized only what he could get. Scalps were used in the Victory Dance and were desirable as fringe decoration for shirts and shields.

In the foregoing, and in the following, the legal analysis is deliberately pushed further than the Comanche would consciously push it. In any

[1] Cf. George Bird Grinnell, *Coup and Scalp Among the Plains Indians* (American Anthropologist, vol. 12, 1910), pp. 296–310.

1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

Case 28. Adultery: Bone vs. Cómatsit
Informant: Visits Her Relatives (niece to Bone) 627x 684

"Bone and his younger brother were living together with Bone's wife. She was called Little. One day Little was out collecting sticks for the fire; it took her a long, long time, until Bone began to suspect things. He called on his little ten year old sister to go see what his wife was up to. The little girl went looking about. Finally she found the pile of wood near a tipi, so she went over and looked in. There she saw her grown-up sister-in-law lying in bed with a man.

" 'What are you doing there, auntie?' the little girl asked. 'My brother wants you to come home right away. You'd better hurry up.'

" 'Oh,' Little tried to reassure her. 'I just came in here for a smoke. You run along now.'

"The little sister did just that. She ran home as fast as she could to tell her brother she had seen his wife lying in bed in a certain tipi: how she had seen her there with Cómatsit (a Mexican name). Soon after, Little came home. 'Now we are going hunting,' announced Bone. 'Come, brother, we are going after game. We shall not stop to eat. You are coming, too,' he told his wife. Then they started out, but as soon as they were out of slight of the camp, Bone stopped the procession. He ripped the clothes from Little and violently threw her upon the ground. 'Now tell me,' he thundered, 'what were you doing in that tipi?'

" 'Oh, my husband,' Little wept, 'I did nothing there. Your little sister has told you an untruth. She does not know what she says.'

" 'We'll see,' muttered Bone. So saying, he placed his hands firmly on her throat. 'Now tell me,' he commanded. Then he choked her and choked her and choked her.

"At last she gasped, 'Yes, I did it.'

"Then he let go of her. With his freed hands he drew his knife and deftly cut off half her nose. 'Come, brother,' he said. So the brother picked up their wife's clothes, and away they went, leaving poor Little lying on the ground where they had mutilated her. When they got back to the camp, Bone sent his little sister out again. 'Go to our wife's grandmother and tell her to go get her.' So the old grandmother went and found Little and took her home.

"Next Bone and his brother went to Cómatsit to sue for damages because of the offense he had committed. They got most of that man's fine clothes and six horses from him besides."

Another case shows how the third degree instituted on purely circumstantial evidence brought a confession and led to a damage suit which was settled by the defendant giving up three horses. Carrying A Sunshade told how Yellow Bear found a red bead under his bed one time when they were getting ready to move camp. How did that bead get there? It was not his own! And it was of the kind worn only by men. So he called on his *kaits*[1] to accompany him with his wife to a lonely spot. Once there they started to "question" her. She denied everything at first, but after they had put

[30]

[1] [i.e., his formal friend — Analyst]

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

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His-oo-sán-chees (The Little Spaniard)
From a painting by Catlin
Courtesy Bureau of American Ethnology

[Facing p. 15]

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

The Comanches

302 Black was the
[822] war paint—the emblem of death—but red, yellow, olive green, and blue were favorite colors. There appears to have been no uniform manner of make-up. One warrior painted his face red, his eyelids white, and streaked his face with black. Another painted one side black and the other yellow down to the waist; another wore red on one side and yellow on the other, with lines of black upon his cheeks.

304 Tattooing was not conspicuous in the Comanche tribe, but both
301 sexes tattooed the face and body, the chest being the most commonly used part of the torso.[28] Clinton Smith records that his chief had a black star tattooed on his chest.[29] The warriors were as proud of their battle scars as old-time German students were of their dueling wounds, and brought them out more conspicuously by tattooing around them.[30] Bears' claws, horse hair, mules' tails, beads, and other similar
[H11] materials might be appended to the hair or about the body. Bands of rawhide or copper wire served to protect the wrist of the left hand from the slap of the bow string.

Another fancy of the Comanche male was to puncture his ears for rings. "A young man," says Breaks Something, "sees other men have their ears pierced. He comes home and wants to have it done too." This was in late adolescence. The young man asked one of his female relatives to pierce his ears. She took him to the lodge of a woman who had recently had a baby easily, so it would hurt less. There she heated a needle red hot (in the old days she used a cactus spine) and burned six to eight holes all along the helix of one ear. The other was punctured only three or four times. A greased straw was then run through the hole, taken out, regreased, and left in until the wound healed. The boy liked to have all the holes pierced at once, so he could wear all his earrings at once. The old-time earrings were long, thin shells obtained from the Mexicans. A few old men can still be seen who wear circles of brass or silver wire. The many shells were so heavy that the top of the ear bent over under the weight, but the discomfort was borne for the satisfaction it gave. As for the piercing service, it was done for the boy gratis.

291 A Comanche woman clothed herself in buckskin. The luxurious

[28] Abbé Emmanuel Domenech, *Seven Years Residence in the Great Deserts of North America*, II, 281; Humfreville, *Twenty Years among Our Hostile Indians*, 184.
[29] C. and J. D. Smith, *op. cit.*, 47.
[30] Smithwick, *op. cit.*, 178.

and easy to wear. Although there were variations to suit the individual taste and needs, the general pattern remained fairly uniform. A Comanche woman in motion was a graceful sight, with the gorgeous fringes swaying with every movement and the brilliant patterns of beading glittering in the sunlight or firelight.

The woman wore her hair cropped and traced the part line with vermilion, although she seldom went to the trouble of combing or otherwise caring for her hair; it just hung loose. The care that did not go into her hair was devoted to facial make-up. Her eyes were accentuated with red or yellow lines above and below the lids and sometimes crossing at the corners. Her ears were painted red inside, and both cheeks were daubed with a solid red-orange circle or triangle. She also occasionally tattooed her face and breast, and wore bracelets and necklaces. As a parallel to the strong institutional friendship between two men, two Comanche women friends might dress alike.

Little girls, unlike small boys, always wore some form of clothing. A girl wore a breechclout until near the age of puberty, when she donned the buckskin dress. She wore her hair long and in plaits.

Fine clothes were so prized for dressing up that each Comanche had a wardrobe case made of rawhide, called *nat'sakɔna*. It was envelope-shaped, laced together at the edges, and had a tie-down, fold-over flap. Thus it was different from the parfleche, or ɔyɔ:*t*, as the Comanche called the meat bag. In his case he kept his best suit, his leggings, moccasins, blanket, and braid wrappers. It was up to his mother to care for his wardrobe.

If he had a war bonnet or feathers, they were kept separately in a tubular bag, called *tunawɔs*, that could be slung from his waist as he rode his horse, so that they could be ready for instant donning in case of attack. In this bag was also carried war paint, a brush, and a mirror after mirrors became available. If the occasion arose, a Comanche wanted to look his best.

Home to the Comanche was his tipi, or conical skin dwelling. It represented a wonderful combination of utility and portability, for it could be raised or lowered within minutes. It was constructed of tanned buffalo hides sewed together and stretched, flesh side out, over a conical framework of from twelve to thirty poles. The standard number in the opinion of modern Comanches was twenty-two poles.

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

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A Comanche woman, the wife of Milky Way, in 1872

Courtesy Bureau of American Ethnology

[Facing p. 110]

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

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Big Looking Glass (Pianaronit), in 1894

Courtesy Bureau of American Ethnology

[Facing p. 111]

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

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Buffalo Hump
Courtesy National Archives

[Facing p. 174]

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

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Horse Back (Kiyou)

Bureau of American Ethnology photograph
Courtesy Denver Art Museum

[Facing p. 175]

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

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Quanah Parker and one of his wives, in 1892
Courtesy Bureau of American Ethnology

[Facing p. 238]

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4. 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

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Quanah Parker's children, in 1892

Courtesy Bureau of American Ethnology

[FACING p. 239]

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

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Ten Bears, in 1872

Courtesy Bureau of American Ethnology

[FACING p. 270]

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

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Mumshukawa

Bureau of American Ethnology photograph
Courtesy Denver Art Museum

[Facing p. 271]

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

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Gets to Be a Middle-aged Man (Tenewerka), in 1933, one of the Comanches who stole the horses from the stone corral at Fort Sill in 1878

Photograph by E. A. Hoebel

[Facing p. 334]

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

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Voice of the Sunrise (Tabananika), chief of the Yamparika

[Facing p. 335]

Courtesy Bureau of American Ethnology

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

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Albert Attocknie (Lone Tipi), in 1924
Courtesy Bureau of American Ethnology

[Facing p. 350]

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

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Hair Hanging Down, in 1930
Courtesy Bureau of American Ethnology

[Facing p. 351]

5: Carlson & Jones E, N-4, 5 (1933)1939
NO6 Comanche NO6

824 276 796 type generally affected by members of the Peyote cult among all Oklahoma tribes," and he also mentions (p. 163) obtaining a necklace of mescal beans from the Iowa, but he does not connect either of these with the peyote ceremony. Schultes (21, p. 141) states that a [789 841] Kiowa peyote leader wore mescal beans on the lower part of his leggings "as a safeguard against stepping on menstrual blood," and La Barre (12, p. 45) observed mescal beans worn on Kiowa peyote moccasins for the same purpose. La Barre (12, p. 106) indicates an ● [301] unpublished manuscript by Mooney as his source for the statement that the Comanche used to get mescal beans from near Fort Stanton (New Mexico), but apparently only for ornamental purposes.

783 824 Our informants stated that in ceremonies the leaves of the red cedar or juniper (*Juniperus virginiana*) were placed on the fire and the smoke inhaled for purification. Throughout the Plains the red cedar is associated with ceremonies and particularly with purification. La Barre (12, pp. 45–53) mentions several instances of the participation of a "Cedar-man" in the Kiowa–Comanche type of peyote rites. The duties of this individual seem to be to sprinkle "dried and rubbed cedar" on the fire, and at certain stages the members purify themselves in the smoke from this incense. Schultes (21, p. 139) describes the typical manner of use of the cedar incense in peyote ceremonies.

824 352 171 The Comanche brought great quantities of wormwood or "sage" (*Artemisia filifolia*) into the tipi for use as cushions. There is a strong suggestion that they did this in the ceremonial tipi especially, where "sage" (*Artemisia spp.*) was commonly employed as floor covering and cushions. La Barre (12, p. 45) mentions the spreading of sagebrush in the tipi for seats in the Kiowa–Comanche type of peyote ceremony and the resting of the "father peyote" on sprigs of sage (pp. 46–47). Opler (18, pp. 277, 279) says that the Carrizo and the Lipan Apache also strewed it on the floor and describes the placing of the "chief peyote" on it, for the peyote is considered to be friendly to no plant but this. Schultes (21, pp. 139–140) describes approximately the same uses of sage (the species *Artemisia vulgaris*) in the tipi, mentions the chewing of a few leaves of it before eating peyote, and also its place in the sweat lodge.

824 343 Two other plants used by the Comanche in the sweat lodge are the skunkbush (*Rhus trilobata*) and little bluestem grass (*Andropogon scoparius*). The bark of the former was placed in hot water and the

mournful fact, that much of it is obtained from those unfortunate individuals, who fall victims to their cupidity. They cut off the hair from the back part of their heads, leaving it in front, the longer the better, and which they divide so as to bring it down from each temple, and to this they fasten any other that they can get, until it nearly reaches the feet. The savage who cut off mine, wore it in this way, and took frequent opportunity exultingly to remind me of it. But their cues with them are indispensable, and if they cannot obtain them in one way, they will in another, and horse-hair answers in the room of better. They do [57] them up usually in strips of red and blue cloth, carefully winding it closely from the top to the extremity, with the red on one side, and the blue on the other. To a small tuft of hair which they leave behind, is appended trinkets of the most trifling kind, such as old buttons, or any thing that will jingle, and on their arms and fingers they have a profusion of rings of different kinds. Their ornaments are laid aside when they go out to war.

.Their treatment of the sick is truly singular. When any of them, whether male or female, is considered to be seriously indisposed, they (the women) take all the grass and every other obstruction from a spot of ground sufficiently large to admit of the construction of two tents together; these are for the accommodation of friends. In the centre of the circle formed by the tent, they dig

19: Lowie E-5 (1912) 1915 NO6 Comanche NO6

formerly certain "dauntless men," called pía rē'kap ĕ'kapit (Large Red Buffalo Meat), but these, too, were not associated with a special group. They were expected to act very quietly and practise uncommunicativeness (naĭmeàpaĭet). One of them, who was killed by the Navajo, had a blue or some other cross painted on his quiver, and carried a singular tomahawk with long blade and eagle feather tied to the handle. There was nothing distinctive about the dress worn by these dauntless men.

In connection with the buffalo hunt there does not seem to have been any police body, and though the tribesmen were warned not to advance ahead of their fellows, the only punishment meted out to offenders was to reprove them. On the other hand, the Big Horse company does seem to have regulated traveling. They had no other political function except to act as guides when the Comanche were on the march and to make peace with other tribes. Wakinĭ said that the Big Horses numbered about twenty and were always mature men. They had a distinctive song, but never danced by themselves. They painted their bodies red, down to the waist, and tied hawk and sparrowhawk feathers to the back of the head, so that these would flutter as their wearers moved. They carried dewclaw rattles and wore a sash made from a part of the skin of a buffalo taken from its neck.

22: Dacus Q-3 (no date) 1960 NO6 Comanche NO6
(ca. 1870)

[ca. 1870]

and he may mutilate or beat her to the full extent of his capricious will. 593
In certain cases he is even permitted to take her life, without acknowledging responsibility to any one for his conduct. As among civilized people, 684
there are "common women of the tribe," outcasts from respectable Comanche society, just as there are outcasts from Christian society among the civilized people of Europe and America. These "Women" have no rights which Comanche ladies and gentlemen are bound to respect. The condition of slavery, which falls to the lot of all women of the tribe, is intensified in the case of the fallen. The others are slaves of one master only; these have many masters and many mistresses. According to our code of morals, the Comanche cyprian has been guilty of no crime, which all the females of the tribe who have arrived at the age of puberty have not committed. She has been unfaithful to the marriage contract, without consulting the wishes of her husband, and without bringing him any gain, and terribly is she made to suffer for it. She is beaten, with many stripes, [304]
and not infrequently suffers mutilation by having her nose cut off. This fixes the brand of her disgrace; and henceforth she becomes the slave of the tribe. There may always be seen a few of these miserable creatures about a Comanche camp. The women are especially cruel toward them, and take much apparent delight in beating them. And yet these same immaculate maidens and matrons have not once, but many times been made to endure the embrace of any purchaser at the behest of their husbands and fathers.

Custom has established laws among the Comanches as among more civil- 671
ized people. It is a law among them that a wife may be mutilated, or even 593
killed, for the crime of infidelity, and yet husband is not averse to select- 684
ing any number of lovers for her and compelling her to accept them, pro- 837
vided his worldly fortune is advanced thereby.

There is no prudish seclusion of Comanche maidens. They mingle with 834
great freedom among the people of their tribe. They may have their 584
beaux as well as their white sisters, and the gallants need have no fears of an over-prudent papa, or an irate "big brother." If there is a rough place in the course of the stream of affection, it is not the youth but the maiden that must suffer the castigation. A pony will suffice to satisfy the utmost requirements of the social law.

When a young Comanche gentleman takes it into his head to go a-wooing, 584
he decks himself with a profusion of paint, a gorgeous head-piece made 301
of feathers; dons his finest suit, puts on all the decorations of distinction 291
which he is entitled to wear, which usually consist of a necklace of wild- 237
cats' claws, coyotes' tails, the canine teeth of wolves, elks' teeth, and not

22: Dacus Q-3 (no date) 1960 NO6 Comanche NO6
(ca. 1870)

584 unfrequently the talons and beaks of the prairie eagles and falcons, a breast-
301 plate of "hair pipe," and perhaps a few bright plates of metal cut into the
291 form of crosses and crescents and sewed to his gorgeously colored suit of
231 dressed skins. So attired, with his face sometimes painted brown, or blue,
584 and at other times flaming in vermillion colors, or yellow as the victims
302 of "the plague of the Indies," the Comanche beau mounts his pony and proceeds to the lodge of his inamorata, dismounts, and, if the maiden comes and hitches his pony, enters and squats upon the ground; and displays his discontent with his lot by responding to every inquiry with a most dolorous
584 "Ugh! Ugh!" After manifesting his misery to an extent deemed sufficient, the Comanche young gentleman rises with great dignity, and repeating two or three knell-like "Ugh! Ughs!" he remounts and rides off without so much as deigning to utter a word. If the maiden he desires to woo does not take charge of his pony, that ends the courtship. He would despise himself and be the fool of the tribe to persist under such circumstances.

An account of this visit is carefully certified to the master of the lodge, on his return. Our dandy, like many civilized gallants, is always very careful to make his initiatory visit when paterfamilias is not at home. The way is now open for further negotiations. The girl is not usually again consulted. The young dandy has merely condescended to indicate his prefer-
584 ence for her. She of course must be delighted. If the father is a chief or
583 principal man in the tribe, he provides a dower for the daughter. The young suitor must be able to respond in equal measure in the way of presents of this world's goods. Sometimes a Comanche belle may have, as a portion, as many as fifty ponies. The suitor in such case should be prepared to turn over fifty-one ponies as a present to his would be father-in-law.
[585] If this can be done, a bargain is usually concluded. No further ceremony is necessary. The maiden and her fifty ponies become the absolute property of the young man. He has "swapped" fifty-one ponies for fifty ponies and got a wife, or rather slave, into the bargain.

585 When negotiations have been concluded, the dandy proceeds to the lodge of his bride, but not in the same plight as before. He enters, throws down his deer skin mantle, casts from him his weapons, and then orders the bride to enter upon her duties as a wife and slave by taking them up and proceeding to follow him to his own lodge, bearing the burdens he has thrown down for her.

[595] The bride may have three or four sisters, and they may all be wives of her husband before the expiration of a week. Mothers-in-law excite
606 little feeling, either of favor or aversion, among the Comanches. They play
585 a minor part in the affairs of the newly constituted households.

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

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Yapai Comanche band "chief" in 1890. Sanapia's maternal grandfather.

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

452 When their money ran out before payment time, we would credit those who were not heavy drinkers until the next Grass Money time. Though all merchandise was charged to the husband, the wives bought in the same way. We followed the custom of keeping the sales slip for each wife's purchases with her name, but we were never called upon to show who bought what. I wondered whether the wives had an after-payment settlement.

432 The women always had a lot of fun buying dry goods. We kept yardsticks laid out along the dry-goods counter so that a woman could point to the particular bolt she was interested in. Each bought for herself and her children; but as each made her choices, the other wife or wives stood by the counter and passed remarks freely about her selections. These remarks always caused much merriment, not only within the group itself but also from other Indian women listening in.

177 One white custom at which the Comanche women never ceased
829 to wonder was the freedom with which white women would converse with men other than those of their own families. A homesteader's wife who had not talked to anyone but her husband for two weeks would come in plumb full of talk. As she was doing her buying, she would tell me all about the crops, the new calves or colts, and where she and her husband would be driving to church or a picnic the next day. In turn she would want to know all about what happened in town, who had had a baby, who had died, and all the gossip. Meanwhile Indian women who had, I knew, been to Carlisle or Chilocco would be listening very intently and talking in low tones to other women sitting near, apparently describing the conversation.

562 Comanche men and boys could scarcely help being vain, with all the attention the women and girls of the family bestowed upon them. This was especially apparent when the family as a whole was going to
292 a gathering of any kind, white or Indian. The women would have the finest of shirts and neck scarves prepared for the husband and the boys to wear for the occasion. Often the shirt and bandana would
302 be made from the finest red or pink silk. Nearly all the men wore
301 their hair long, and the husband would sport a new hairdo with strips of otter skin or fancy yarn braided in with the hair to increase the
292 size of the braid. The white sheet that was rolled up and worn around the waist like a sash had been washed and sun-bleached until it was of a dazzling whiteness.

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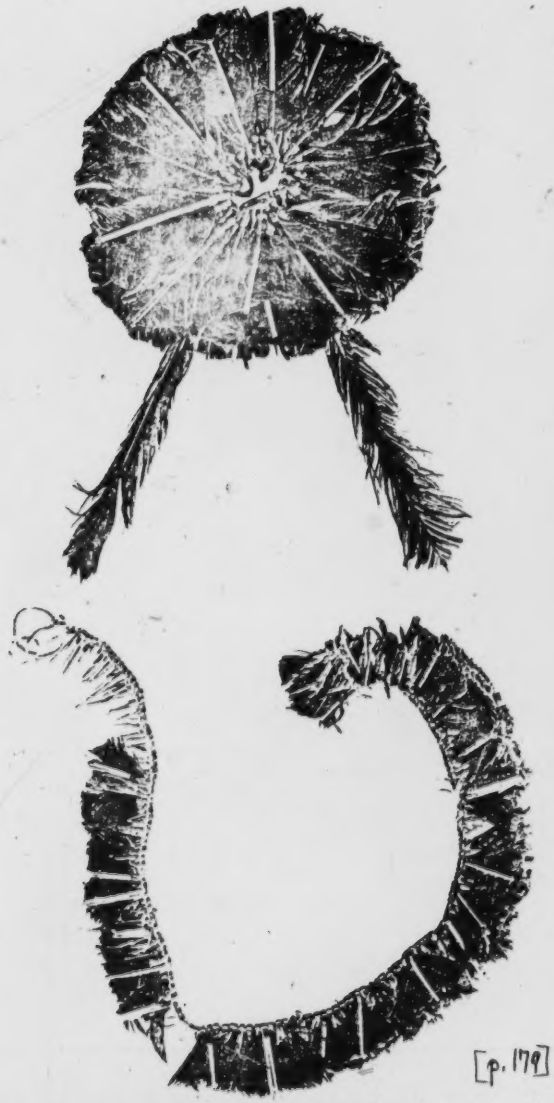

[p. 179]

FIGURES 30–31. Comanche feather ornaments. (USNM 1477 and 1478.)

180 of the head at the front. The designs are long, interlocking triangles of the larger size embroidering beads, sometimes referred to as "pony beads," sewn to the base in a lazy stitch. The triangles pointing forward are of sky blue and those directed backward of white beads. Toward the back of the cap a band of clipped turkey vulture feathers extends over the top, behind which are sewn short narrow strips of rabbit skin. Much longer strips of rabbit skin, each tied to the lower edge of the red cloth, serve as dangling pendants from each side of the cap.

The trailer consists of 43 secondary wing feathers of the immature golden eagle. The uppermost six feathers are tied to the back of the cap. Each feather is secured in place by passing it through a hole in a strip of rawhide (2 cm. wide), looping the basal end of the feather around a buckskin cord, and wrapping it with sinew. The slotted rawhide strip through which the feathers pass serves as a spacer to keep the feathers an equal distance apart.

In view of the known relationship between the Comanche and Shoshoni, it is of interest to find similar caps worn by Shoshoni Indians pictured in Alfred Jacob Miller's drawings and paintings based upon his visit to the fur traders' rendezvous in Wyoming during the summer of 1837.[15]

Although a Comanche warrior may have worn this feathered headdress in battle, there is no reason to believe it was more or less typical of Comanche war headgear than several other types. The headdress of the famous Comanche war chief, Cuerna Verde (Green Horn), was described as early as 1768 as "a green horn on his forehead, fixed in a headdress, or on a tanned leather head piece."[16] A two-horned bonnet captured from the Comanche who raided Corpus Christi in June 1844 is depicted in Figure 18. A Lino Sánchez y Tapia's watercolor of Comanche warriors (Plate 3) B shows both a horned buffalo hide cap and a bonnet of upright plumes. David G. Burnet, who knew the Comanche in 1819, wrote of them, "The head-dress is as various as their fancies can suggest and their means supply. Parrow-a-fifty's parade head-dress was a cap made of the scalp of a buffalo bull, with the horns attached in proper position. . . . They sometimes load their heads with feathers, arranged in lofty plumes, or dangling in the air in pensile confusion, or wove into an immense hood."[17] It is apparent that individual preference was reflected in the variety of Comanche headgear worn prior to 1850.

Feather Ornaments Figures 30-31

A circular ornament composed of 57 clipped turkey vulture feathers, carefully strung on a thin buckskin cord by doubling the end of each feather around the cord and tieing it securely with sinew, is shown in Figure 30.

15. Ross, 1951, pp. 34, 127, 199.
16. Thomas, 1940, p. 167.
17. Burnet (1851, p. 133) and Wallace and Hoebel (1952, pp. 82–83) claim that the well-known "war bonnet" of the Plains Indians (presumably the brow-banded type) was not common among the Comanche before the 1870s.

A [See p. 169--Analyst.]
B [Plate 3 has not been processed for the Files--Analyst.]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 184]

184 Two longer, complete feathers from a smaller bird are tied to the cord in a similar fashion. Probably this ornament was worn by a Comanche man at the back of the head, with the two longer feathers in an upright position, either as a war medicine or as a dance ornament. The circular ring is 17 cm. in outer diameter; the longest of the two complete feathers is 19 cm. in length.

Another Comanche feather ornament is composed of clipped turkey vulture feathers tied in line to a buckskin cord. (see Figure 31.) The length of this feathered band must originally have been 54 cm., although some feathers toward one end are now fragmentary. There are two buckskin tiestrings at one end, and one at the other. The length of this ornament suggests that it may have been worn as a headband or a neckband.

Comanche Moccasins Figure 32

Although moccasins are probably the most common objects in Plains Indian collections, the pair illustrated in Figure 32 is especially noteworthy as probably the earliest documented example of Comanche footgear, and one of the earliest examples of the hard-soled moccasin from the Great Plains. Each moccasin consists of two pieces, a rawhide hard sole sewn to a soft-skin upper. The upper is a single piece of skin so cut as to furnish the narrow tongue and upturned ankle flap as well as the foot covering. The maximum sole length is 27 cm., and the highest portion of the ankle flap, measuring along the vertical seam at the back, is 10 cm. Each moccasin also has a buckskin tiestring which passes through holes in the upper just forward of the ankle opening, one at each side and one at the center of the back.

Caddoan (?) Moccasins Figure 33

Berlandier does not claim that the moccasins illustrated in Figure 33 are of Comanche origin. They differ basically from the moccasins in Figure 32, each being formed of a single piece of soft dressed skin which provides the sole and covering for the foot as well as the relatively high-topped ankle flaps. These moccasins have no tongues. They are sewn in only two places, up the center back of the heel, and along the midline of the instep from toes to ankle opening, the front portion gathered and puckered over the toes. Each moccasin is 23 cm. long on the bottom of the foot and 17 cm. high at the vertical heel seam. Soft-soled moccasins of this general type had a wide distribution among the Woodland Indian tribes. Dr. Edward Palmer collected a pair of moccasins of this pattern among the Caddo in 1868.[18] The Berlandier specimen may also be of Caddoan origin.

Comanche Horsehide Pouch Figure 34

A Comanche pouch of undetermined use was ingeniously fashioned from the neck and mane of a horse. The mane serves as a decorative pendant to a pouch, roughly 12 cm. square, formed by sewing portions of two sides of the neck together at the sides with sinew. The pouch was carried by a rawhide cord of uneven width, which passed over the user's shoulder and was sewn to the top of each side of the pouch.

18. See Swanton, 1942, plate 15 (top).